



Seattle's Comprehensive Plan Update

ISSUE PAPER #1: Options for Updating Urban Village Growth Targets

1. Problem Statement

The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires that the City incorporate new citywide growth targets, which will cover the period 2004-2024, as part of the 2004 update to the Comprehensive Plan. While all Comprehensive Plans in the State incorporate 20-year population growth estimates, Seattle took the second step of creating growth estimates for sub-areas in the city. These urban village growth targets were introduced to provide an equitable framework for the distribution of growth in the city, to aid in planning for the city's urban villages, and to help to identify resource needs that might arise in a small area because of expected growth. The City must now decide whether to create new urban-village level growth targets for the period 2004-2024.

2. Background

What are growth targets?

Growth targets are planning tools. They are an estimate of the number of households or jobs that might move into an area over a 20-year period. The growth targets currently in the Comprehensive Plan cover the period 1994-2014. They represent an amount of growth that the city would like to see over that period in order to achieve a balance of growth. Growth targets often represent a level of development that could support transit and meet other goals. They provide a foundation for neighborhood plans and for City services to support an area as it changes over time.

The word "target" is probably a poor choice because it leads some people to think that the number is a cap on the amount of growth that will occur, while others believe that something is wrong if a neighborhood (or the city as a whole) is not on track to meet its targets. Neither of these is the case. Growth "estimates" might be a better term to describe the role these numbers have.

What areas have targets?

There are targets at three geographic levels:

- ◆ Citywide targets are set by the King County Growth Management Planning Council.
- ◆ Growth goals describe the share of the citywide target that different levels of centers and villages should take as a whole (e.g., urban centers taken together are expected to see 45% of citywide residential growth.)
- ◆ Numerical targets are set for growth in each individual center and village.

What factors went into setting the existing growth targets?

The existing urban village-level growth targets were set by evaluating a number of different factors, including:

- ◆ Development trends.
- ◆ Capacity for additional development.
- ◆ Existing plans.
- ◆ Existing resources to support growth.
- ◆ Goals for different types of villages.

Growth targets for some areas were set to encourage densities that would better support transit use. Finally, one or two preliminary targets were adjusted as part of neighborhood planning.

Has the City achieved its targets?

Seattle will meet approximately 42% of its 20-year household growth target over the first 10 years of the Comprehensive Plan. This is consistent with projections that growth would be faster over the second 10 years of the Comprehensive Plan than over the first 10 years. Over the same period, 51% of the 20-year job growth target was met. Growth was distributed between the types of villages at roughly the distribution planned for in the Comprehensive Plan.

Planned vs. Expected Distribution of Growth

Location	% of Citywide Residential Growth		% of Citywide Employment Growth	
	Planned	Experienced	Planned	Experienced
In Urban Centers	45%	41%	65%	56%
In Manufacturing/Industrial Centers	No Goal	0%	10%	13%
In Hub Urban Villages	15%	15%	15%	11%
In Residential Urban Villages	15%	19%	No Goal	7%
Outside of Centers and Villages	25%	26%	No Goal	13%

Note: totals may not add up because of rounding

At the village or center level, five neighborhoods have exceeded their 20-year residential targets and four neighborhoods have exceeded their 20-year employment targets over the first 10 years of the Comprehensive Plan. On the other hand, two neighborhoods have seen less than 10% of their 20-year residential growth and five neighborhoods have seen less than 10% of their 20-year employment growth over 10 years. When the Plan was adopted, some difference in growth rates was expected. However, the wide range in growth towards targets is a reminder that the targets are policy-planning tools intended to meet a number of goals, rather than specific commitments as to the growth a village will experience.

How much additional development is the City expecting?

Seattle has committed to being able to grow by 51,510 households and 92,083 jobs over the period 2004-2024. This includes households and jobs that were planned for when the Comprehensive Plan was first adopted but have not yet occurred. The amount of growth

in the new targets that has yet to be planned for is about 16,500 households and 11,500 jobs. The 2004-2024 targets are equivalent to 37%-39% of the city's zoning capacity for additional housing units or jobs.

How are the Urban Village Growth Targets used?

- ◆ **Provide for common expectations:** They help the City, citizens and regional interests understand expectations for the future of different urban villages and provide the foundation for policies about how the City will treat different parts of the city.
- ◆ **Planning Tools:** As assumptions for neighborhood planning, neighborhood growth targets helped communities to understand and wrestle with the amount of growth expected in their area.
- ◆ **Guides for Capital Investments:** The city has reviewed capital facilities and utilities in urban villages using the growth targets to identify whether sufficient capacity exists to support expected growth.
- ◆ **Influence rezones of property:** When a change in zoning is proposed for a location within an urban village, the City analyzes whether sufficient capacity would continue to exist after the rezone to allow the village to meet its growth target.

3. Options

The urban village growth targets are not required under state law. The City has wide latitude to treat the targets in a number of ways. The City has identified three options for updating the Comprehensive Plan's urban village growth targets in response to higher citywide targets. Each of these options has benefits and detriments.

1. Retain existing 2014 urban village targets/apply new 2024 target citywide only

- Pros:
- ◆ Adopted neighborhood plans are based on these 2014 targets.
 - ◆ Allows current neighborhood plan implementation work to continue, based on the original targets.
 - ◆ Provides a benchmark for measuring growth in each urban center and urban village.
- Cons:
- ◆ May be confusing if most targets reflect growth to 2014 in a plan for citywide growth to 2024.
 - ◆ Original targets do not reflect current expectations about growth in some neighborhoods.
 - ◆ Some areas have exceeded their original 20-year targets already and are likely to see additional growth. This growth would not be accounted for if the existing targets continue to be used.

2. Update targets to reflect new 2004-2024 citywide targets

- Pros:
- ◆ Neighborhoods and the City get a better understanding of potential future growth over 20 years.

- ◆ Infrastructure planning based on future targets can be done at a longer-term and more citywide basis than under other alternatives.
- Cons: ◆ Adding additional growth targets to areas that have exceeded their targets may result in requests to reopen recently completed neighborhood plans.
- ◆ Requires more intensive staff commitment and more public process than other alternatives.

3. Eliminate urban village targets

- Pros: ◆ Simpler.
- ◆ At the urban village level, progress towards growth targets has ranged widely, and the growth targets have not been a consistent indicator of the amount of growth that will occur in a given neighborhood.
- Cons: ◆ Monitoring growth becomes more difficult if benchmark expectations aren't available.
- ◆ Neighborhoods may not have as clear an understanding of changes that could occur in their area over time.
- ◆ City departments will not have an understanding of potential changes in an area to provide a foundation for small-area infrastructure planning associated with citywide growth.
- ◆ Would need a different mechanism to ensure that rezones do not significantly impact the citywide interest in making sure that jobs and housing can be accommodated in urban villages.

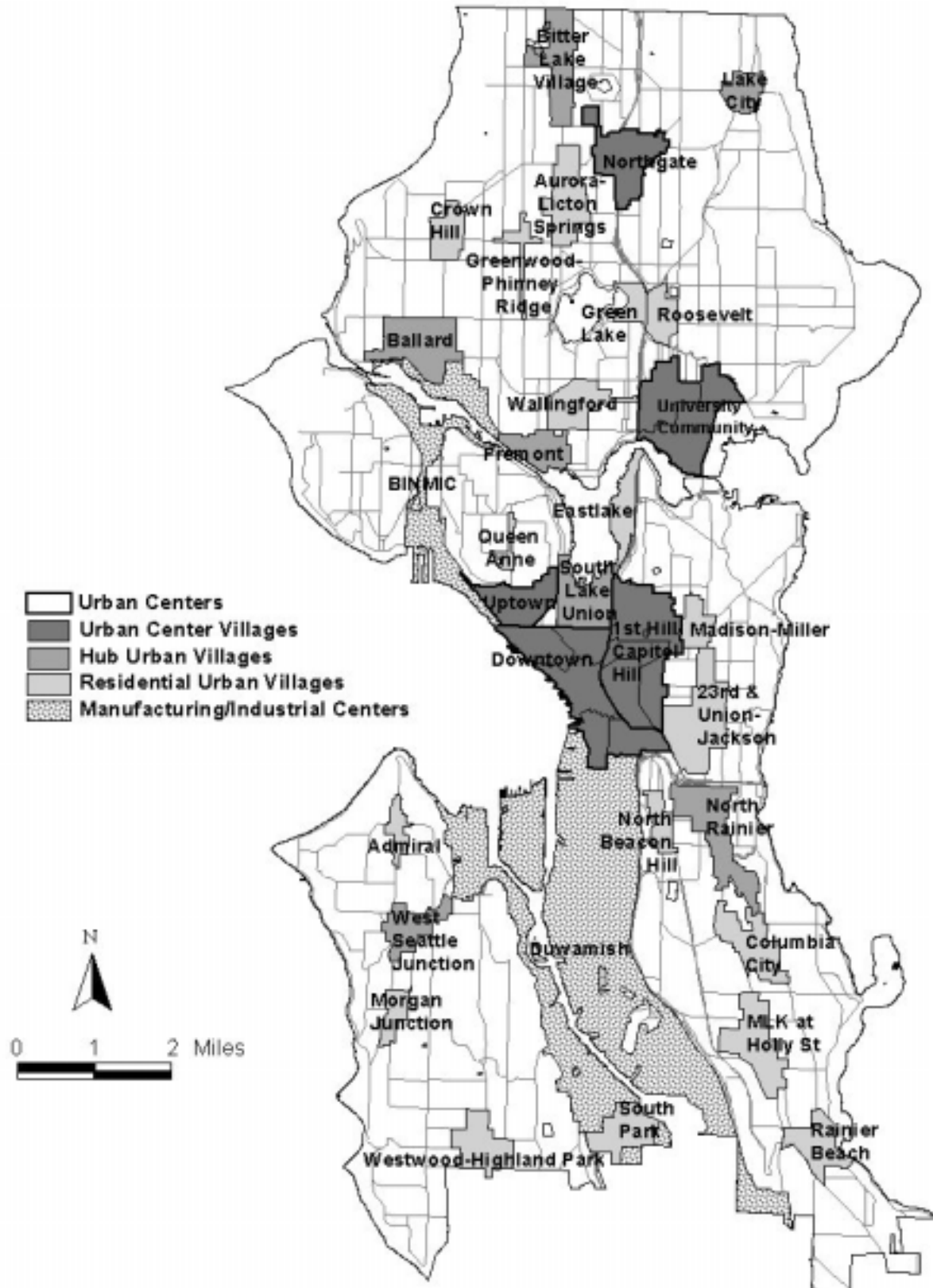
Net Housing Unit Growth in Urban Centers and Villages

	Net Units Built 1994-2003	20-Year Growth Target (1994-2014)	% of Growth Target Achieved	Unbuilt units in Issued Building Permits (10/03)
Urban Centers	8,830	26,700	33%	1,809
1st Hill/Capitol Hill Urban Center	2,213	5,540	40%	237
12th Avenue	837	540	155%	7
First Hill	412	2,400	21%	99
Capitol Hill	419	1,980	17%	132
Pike/Pine	545	620	88%	-1
Downtown Urban Center	4,918	14,700	33%	1,174
Belltown	3,023	6,500	47%	536
Chinatown-International District	456	1,300	35%	191
Commercial Core	1,076	1,300	83%	-4
Denny Triangle	293	3,500	8%	356
Pioneer Square	61	2,100	3%	95
Northgate Urban Center	171	3,000	6%	0
University Urban Center	663	2,110	31%	281
University District Northwest	543	1,630	33%	138
Ravenna	139	480	29%	146
Uptown Urban Center	865	1,312	66%	117
Hub Urban Villages	2,255	9,000	25%	1,634
Ballard	443	1,520	29%	637
Bitter Lake Village	205	1,260	16%	77
Fremont	174	820	21%	150
Lake City	545	1,400	39%	99
North Rainier	128	1,200	11%	12
South Lake Union	372	1,700	22%	382
West Seattle Junction	388	1,100	35%	277
Residential Urban Villages	3,707	9,000	41%	1,154
23rd & Union-Jackson	569	900	63%	240
Admiral	214	340	63%	0
Aurora-Licton Springs	375	900	42%	59
Columbia City	52	740	7%	32
Crown Hill	48	310	15%	0
Eastlake	290	380	76%	174
Green Lake	105	400	26%	116
Greenwood-Phinney Ridge	198	350	57%	212
Madison-Miller	386	400	97%	300
MLK at Holly St	509	800	64%	-77*
Morgan Junction	50	300	17%	8
North Beacon Hill	52	550	9%	15
Queen Anne	70	300	23%	15
Rainier Beach	80	740	11%	8
Roosevelt	62	340	18%	0
South Park	78	350	22%	14
Wallingford	458	200	229%	20
Westwood-Highland Park	111	700	16%	18
Outside Centers and Villages	5,659	15,300	37%	1,070
Total Citywide Housing Change	20,451	59,962	34%	5,667

Source: City of Seattle, Department of Planning and Development, 2003

*Demolition results from phasing of the redevelopment of the Holly Park public housing garden community. The final project will add over 500 units to this village.

Urban Centers and Villages



Covered Employment Growth in Centers and Villages

	Job Growth 1995-2001	20-Year Growth Target (1994-2014)	% of Growth Target
Urban Centers	41,900	95,500	44%
First Hill/Capitol Hill	6,103	11,700	52%
12th Avenue	435	1,200	36%
Capitol Hill	368	3,000	12%
First Hill	3,820	6,100	63%
Pike/Pine	1,479	1,400	106%
Downtown	28,496	62,700	45%
Belltown	5,670	4,500	126%
Chinatown-International District	262	2,800	9%
Commercial Core	18,015	27,000	67%
Denny Triangle	3,863	23,600	16%
Pioneer Square	685	4,800	14%
Northgate	1,996	9,300	21%
University Community	5,305	8,500	45%
Ravenna	740	700	106%
University Dist. NW	1,005	3,000	33%
Uptown	-490	3,300	-15%
Manufacturing/Industrial Centers	9,647	14,660	66%
BINMIC	1,842	3,800	48%
Duwamish	7,805	10,860	72%
Hub Urban Villages	7,844	21,400	37%
Ballard	55	3,700	1%
Bitter Lake Village	1,013	2,800	36%
Fremont	817	1,700	48%
Lake City	-86	2,900	-3%
North Rainier	-152	3,500	-4%
South Lake Union	5,947	4,500	132%
West Seattle Junction	250	2,300	11%
Residential Villages	5,346	N/A	N/A
Outside Centers/Villages	9,900	N/A	N/A
Seattle Total	74,637	146,600	51%

Source: Washington State Employment Security Department; Puget Sound Regional Council; City of Seattle, Department of Design, Construction & Land Use, 2002